

A SERMON

PREACHED

To the Right Honourable the Lord
Mayor, and Court of Aldermen of the
City of *London*, at their Anniversary
meeting on Easter Monday *April 1652*,
at the *SPITTLE*.

WHEREIN

The Unity of the Saints with Christ, the
Head, and especially with the Church, the Body;
With the duties thence arising, are endeavoured
to be cleared.

Tending to heale our Rents and Divisions.

The second Impression, corrected by the Authour.

By STEPHEN MARSHAL B.D. and Minister of the
Gospel at *Finchingfield* in *Essex*.

I Cor. 12. 13.

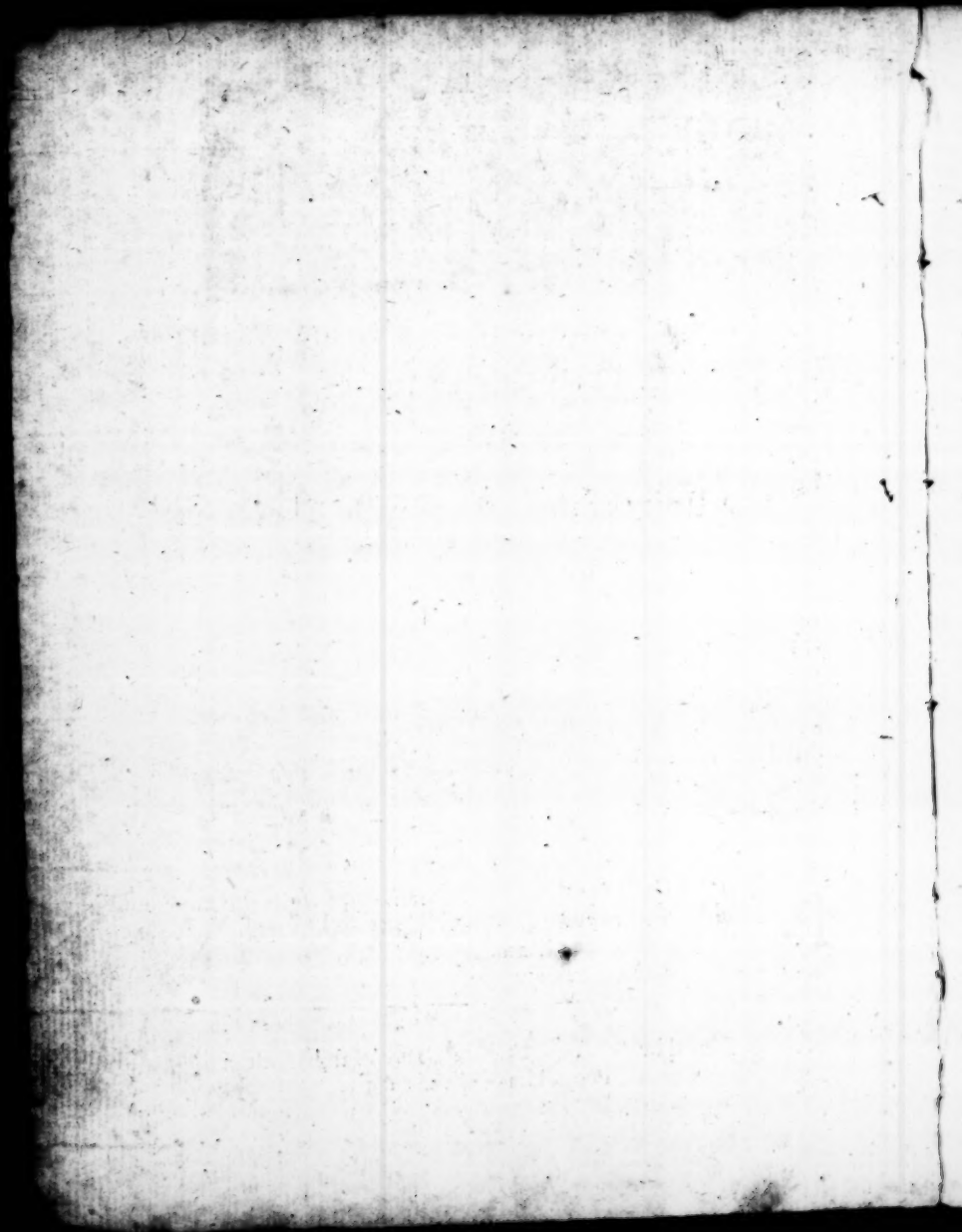
*By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether wee be
Jewes or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been
all made to drinke into one Spirit.*

Zach. 8. 19.

Therefore love the truth and peace.

LONDON

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To the
RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE
Lord Mayor, and Court of Aldermen,
of the famous City of
LONDON.

Right Honourable :

My earnest desire to help quench the flames of our Church-divisions, which threaten destruction to us all, put mee upon the study of this Theame, when I was called to Preach at your late solemne Anniversary meeting ; the same desire hath perswaded me to yeeld ready obedience to your Order for the publishing of it. I doubt not, but as it was the prayer of our blessed Saviour, That all his Saints might be one ; so it is the desire of all true Christians, that Jesus Christ would make all his to be of one mind, and of one heart, and when they cannot be of one minde, yet to be of one heart, and I am as assured, that in his due time he will effect it ;

The Epistle Dedicatory.

when that blessed time is approaching, such Doctrines, as this plaine Sermon holds forth, will be more seriously studied, and more readily imbraced, then they are at this day.

If this mite may contribute any thing to it, yea, if it doe but provoke divided and ingaged men, to search the Scriptures, whether these things here delivered be true, or not, and especially, if it occasion some other of his servants, who have obtained greater ability, and more leasure, to arise, and put their hand to this worke of reconciliation, and pacification; I should then hope, that the Day-star of our peace begun to appear; however, I have peace in the discharge of my duty, and humbly commend the healing of all our breaches to him, who is the Prince of peace; to him also I commend your selves and your great work, and subscribe my selfe,

Your Servant in, and for the Lord,

STEPHEN MARSHALL.

The

The Unity of the Saints with Christ, and especially among themselves.

ROM. 12. 4, 5.

For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.



That you may the better understand the true scope of the Holy Ghost in these words, it is necessary that I carry you a little back. The Apostle having in the eleven first Chapters at large opened the Doctrine of Faith, begins in this twelfth Chapter with the second part of our Christian Religion, which is the Doctrine of Evangelicall obedience, and there hee first propounds the generall nature of it, *That it is a giving up of our selves to be holy and living sacrifices unto God, yeelding unto him a reasonable service.*

Secondly, He sets it out by the generall rule of it, and that is first *Negative*, not to bee conformed to the world, the modes, and customes, and manners of men. And Secondly, *Positive*, viz. to search and know with a renewed minde, what is the will of God, and, as the will of God is discovered, to imbrace and obey it, acknowledging it to be a *good and an acceptable will* to us; these two are generall.

Then in the next place hee begins more particularly to shew wherein this will of God doth stand, or what he hath revealed for the direction of his people. And in the third verse he doth propound one particular rule, to which (because he would have it take the better place) he makes this Preface, *I say, through the grace, that is given me; as if hee should have said, I propound that*

Introduction
shewing the
coherence and
scope of the
Text.

The Unity of the Saints with Christ,

which through mercy, I well understand to be a most excellent and necessary rule; viz. *That every one would be carefull to imploy that talent, which the Lord hath trusted him with, within the compasse of his owne line and place,* thereby to be usefull and profitable to the whole, that is the scope of those words, *That no man should thinke more highly of himselfe, then he ought to thinke, but to thinke soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith,* the same thing which the Apostle, *1 Cor. 12. 7.* means by *the manifestation of the Spirit, which is given to every man to profit withall,* to be faithfull in the imployment of that talent, which the Lord hath entrusted him with, and to use it within the bounds of his own line and calling, and not to thrust himselfe into other mens office or worke, which the Apostle afterward more fully prosecutes verse 6, 7, 8. Now because some man might a little wonder that the Apostle should begin with this, as the very first duty, which he imposeth upon Christians, that therefore the necessity and weight of it might the more appear, he useth a most apt and elegant similitude; look as it is in the natural body of man, the members are very many, take the joynts and sinews, nerves, and vaines, &c, there are abundance of them, and every one of them is indowed with some faculty or other, and all the multitude of members doe make but one body, wherein every member doing its owne office, the whole is nourished, and should they neglect the performance of what God in Nature had intrusted them with, or should not each of them keepe to their owne worke, this neglect or disorder would tend to the destruction of the whole; even so hath the Lord appointed and ordered it in the Church of Christ, that all the people of God, scattered throughout the world, though their multitude bee not to be numbred, yet all these are all compacted by the Lords institution into one body, and in this one body, they are all of them not onely members of Jesus Christ the head, but every one of them members one of another, and given gifts and abilities to be imployed by them for their common good, each needing another, each bound to helpe one another, and by what every one is bound in his place to supply the whole Church, (which is the body of Christ) grows up to perfection, as is most excellently laid down, *Ephes. 4. 16.*

Ephes. 4. 16.

And thus I have brought you to my Text, and opened the generall scope and meaning of it, which words in themselves doe containe

aine the Unity of the Saints in one body with Christ the head, and each of them one with another, from which without any more pre-amble or interpretation, I propound this one onely Lesson, viz.

The whole Church, or the collection or aggregation of all the Saints, are one body in Christ, of which body Christ is the head, and all the Saints are members.

The generall
Doctrine pro-
pounded.

Which I will indeavour briefly to explain, and then come to that branch which I have chosen to insist upon this day.

Know then that our Lord Jesus Christ in the Scripture is said to have a twofold body, the one a naturall body, that body which was conceived in the wombe of the Virgin, which was borne into the world, wherein Christ lived, which dyed, rose againe, and is now ascended up into heaven, this naturall body of Christ is not the body meant in my Text.

The Church is
Christ's body.

But secondly, Christ hath another body very often mentioned in the Scripture, which is called his mysticall body, or a body in a mystery: but because that may be looked upon, but as a blinde, which every man may interpret according to his own fancy, therefore the Spirit of God hath taught us, that the collection or aggregation, or the thus gathering together of all the Saints in one, which the Scripture calls the body of Christ, though it be not his naturall body, yet it is to him *as* his naturall body, and this I pray you to *marke*, and give me leave to prove, because it is the onely foundation of all the Discourse, that I am this day to make to you; I say, The Church, when the Scripture calls it the body of Christ, is to him, *as his naturall body*, that is, they stand to Christ in the same relation that the naturall body doth stand to the naturall head, and Christ stands to them in the same relation, that a naturall head doth to the naturall body, and all the members, that is, all beleevers, or Saints, stand in the same relation one to another, as the members of a naturall body doe stand one to another: this I say, is the foundation of all, and out of the many Texts which might be alledged, to prove it, I shall onely (to this which I have in hand, which saith expressly that wee are all one body in Christ, and every one members one of another) mention two more, which are so plaine, that he that runs may read this truth in them; one is in the *1 Cor. 12*. Indeed almost the whole Chapter is a prooffe, and an improvement of this one truth: the Apostle tells them in the beginning of the Chapter, that there are given to the

And explained

And proved
out of Scripture

1 Cor. 12. 12;
&c.

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- Verf. 7. Church, diversities of gifts, diversities of administrations, diversities of operations, and all these come from the same Spirit, and this Spirit that gives these gifts, and administrations, and operations, hee gives them all to this end, that there may be a profiting of the whole : and presently (that you may understand his meaning) tels us, that look as it is in the naturall body, there is abundance of members joyned, and every one have their severall office for the good of all, so *is Christ*, saith he. by Christ, there, he doth not mean Jesus Christ in his humane nature onely, but Christ mysticall, Christ and all his members gathered into one ; and then goes on in the thirteenth verse, and tels us, That by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether Jewes or Gentiles, bond, or free, and are all made to drink into one Spirit, and so, throughout to the end of the Chapter, prosecutes the same comparison of Christs being as a naturall head to his Church, and all the Saints, as naturall members to Christ, and one to another, and the duties which follow thereupon.
- Verf. 12.
- Verf. 13.

Eph. 4. from 1. Chapter, he exhorted them earnestly to live in love, and keepe the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace ; to provoke them the better to it, he shews them verse 4, 5, and 6. in how many things they are *one* (of which you shal hear more afterward.) Then vers. 7. he addes, that each of them had received gifts, which were the fruits of Christs ascension, all which were given for the converting, edifying, and perfecting of the *body of Christ*, untill it attaine unto the measure of the stature of the fulnesse of Christ, that they all might grow up in all things unto him that is the *head*, even Christ. Now that it might appear what kinde of head and body is meant, he presently falls upon this similitude of a naturall body, verse 16. *From whom the whole body fistly joyned and compacted together, by that which every joynt supplieth according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the whole body to the edifying of it selfe in love.*

And almost parallel to this is, *Col. 2. 19.* where the Apostle tels us, that *from Christ the head, all the body by joynts and bands is knit together, receives nourishment administred, and so increaseth with the increase of God.*

Nothing can be plainer, that look as it is in the naturall body, the Lord hath so cast it, and what the Head doth for its part, the Liver for its part, the Heart for its part, the Brain for its part, and every Joynt

Joynt and Sinew for its part, the whole body growes up to a full stature, and all grows up together; so hath the Lord ordained, and cast it to be in the Church of Christ.

Now this foundation being laid, that though the Church be not Christs naturall body, it is yet *as* his naturall body. The great Question is, Wherein doth this comparison or resemblance stand? Wherein the comparison stands between the Church and a naturall body

To that I answer first: it is easie for a man to name many particulars, wherein the comparison will not hold betwixt the Church and a naturall body: and it is as easie for a man to name many things wherein they are very like one to another; but we must not be wile beyond the Scripture, nor stretch it any further then the Lord intends it; I humbly conceive that the comparison lies properly in these two things.

First, That as in the naturall body the members, and every member hath a reall union with the head, for its owne part, having the same spirit animating it that is in the head, and thereby hath a communion with, and dependance upon the head in all the offices that the head can do for it; so every particular Christian, or member of the Church, hath a reall, indissoluble, spiritual union, and conjunction with the Lord Jesus Christ, having his Spirit communicated unto them, which is the foundation of all their communion, the very root and principle of their spirituall life, and which inables them every one for their part to live unto Christ, *that is one*.

Secondly, Which is the thing I intend, that as in the naturall body all the members doe not onely meet in the head, as all the lines do meet in a Center, and are *one* there, though they do not touch one another any where else, but they are all by the wonderfull power and wisdom of God so contrived, and compacted, and joynted together, that they have a reall union one with another; So in this mystical and spiritual body, all the Saints have not only each for his owne part a union and conjunction with Jesus Christ, but also a reall union and conjunction one with another, which is the foundation of many duties, which every one of them are thereby bound to perform one to another, and of many priviledges, which thereby they enjoy with, and by one another, as shall, God willing, be afterwards opened unto you.

Now this my Text speakes as plainly as any man could wist, when it saith, that *we bring many*, that is, all we Christians, all

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that truly beleeve in, and professe the name of Christ, being very many, *are all one body in Christ*; that is, we all meet, and are one in him, and that is not all, but *we are also all of us members one of another.*

The union of
the Saints one
with another.

Now the first of these, the reall, indissoluble, and spirituall union, that all the people of Christ have with Christ their head, is a most divine, excellent and necessary truth, and indeed, is the foundation, and principle of all our Christian life, and therefore most worthy to be understood by all Gods people: But that not being the maine drift of the holy Ghost in this place, I forbear to speak of at this time, and shal treat only of the second, and that is the union and conjunction that is, and ought to be between all the people of Jesus Christ one with another, they being members one of another; and therein shall indeavour first to prove and clear it, and then hasten to the application of it. For the proof of it, I shall not need any other Texts, then those that I have mentioned already, that *1 Cor. 12.* how fully and clearly doth the Apostle teach, that the eye, the hand, the foot, and every member are for the good, and use of the whole, and none of them can say I have no need of thee, or I have no need of thee; God having so ordered it, that every one of them needs one another, and every one of them are, and ought to be usefull one to another; yea, that even the most mean and feeble of all the members, are not onely of the body as well as the rest, but are necessary to the good of the whole, and those members which we are prone to think lesse honourable, and more uncomely. God hath appointed in this mysticall body, as well as in our naturall bodies to have the more honour put upon them.

1 Cor. 12. 15.
22, 23, 24.

And so in that other fore-mentioned place, the fourth of the *Ephesians*, where he saith, That the whole body being joynted together by that that every joynt supplieth, &c. there is not the least joynt, but it makes for the supply, for the edification of the whole.

To these might be added all those places, which speake of the Church, as one corporation or body under other resemblances, one *vine*, one *house*, one *City*, &c. whereof very many do occur in the holy Scriptures; but all these things will be clearer in my subsequent Discourse, wherein for the fuller clearing the doctrinal part, I shall a little insit upon two maine questions, and then endeavour to resolve a doubt or two, which may seem to lye as objections against all the Saints making but one body.

First,

First, If the Saints bee one body, &c. it may bee demanded, wherein this unity of the Saints stands, or what are the things wherein all the members of Christ have union one with another?

Secondly, If they be thus all one, what are the bands and ligaments, whereby this vast multitude are all of them tyed thus family together?

For the first, If all the Church and people of Jesus Christ be all really one, one with another, and have thereby a communion one with another; the Question is, what are those things wherein they are thus one? *Quest. 1.*

To which I answer, the particulars are both many and excellent; but because I would not burden your memories, I desire you to turne to, and consider with me but one onely Text, which indeed doth comprehend the sum of all that can be said about it, and that is *Eph. 4. ver. 4, 5, 6.* the Apostle exhorting all the Saints *to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*, the better to encourage them to it, useth this motive, *For there is one body, and one spirit, and one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, and Father of all, who is above you all, and through you all, and in you all.* Now in these seven Unities are comprehended all the things, wherein all the Saints of Christ are one; therefore I shall endeavour briefly to open them.

First, They are all of them one *body*, that is, all Gods people throughout all the world, are but one incorporation, and there is no one of them but hee hath as really a membership in the body of Christ, as any other of them; as in an Army, though every one be not an Officer, nor every Souldier equally valiant, or skilfull, yet every one is equally a member of the Army; and as in a City, or Corporation, every Free-man, though no Mayor, Alderman, or Master of a company, &c. yet is as really a member of the City as any other; or look as in a building, it may be some rooms may be larger, beautifuller and usefuller, yet there is not the least stud, the least naile, the least pin, but it is as really a part of the building, as the maine post that upholds it; So take the Church of Christ, which is made up of the collection, and aggregation of all Gods people, there is not one of them, but hee may truly say, I am a part of that house, body, or building of Jesus Christ, as reall as any other.

Secondly,

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Secondly, and they are all one in this, that there is but *one Spirit*, which I thinke signifies these two things (for other Scriptures teach me so to interpret it;) First, they are all of them animated and led by the selfe-same Spirit, that as the members of the body, though they be (it may be) many hundreds, yet there is one individual soule that animates them all; so in the Church of Christ, all the Saints, every one of them have the selfe-same Spirit of Jesus Christ, which is the principle of their life, and animates every one of them; but that is not all: but by the same Spirit, he secondly means 'the Spirit, as it is the Administrator, or distributor of all the gifts of Christ, that whatsoever gifts, graces, operations, administrations are to be found in the whole Church, the self-same Spirit distributeth his gifts variously, as he pleaseth, to some more, and to some lesse, yet gives them all to, and for the good of the whole Church in generall, and for every member in its particular; so the Spirit of God himselfe interprets this, in the first of the *Corinthians*, and the twelfth, from ver. 4. to 14. *There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit, the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every one to profit withall, to one is given a word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, to another faith, to another the gift of healing, &c. but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit; dividing to every man severally, as he will, that is the second, they are all one body, and they have one Spirit.*

Thirdly, and they are all one in this, That they all have the *same hope of their calling*; by hope, there, is not meant the *grace* of hope, whereby we expect and waite for the good that Christ hath purchased for us, but there it signifies the object of hope, and therefore is called the *hope of our calling*, which in other places is called the *hope set before us*, and plainly signifies that, which the Holy Ghost calls the *common salvation* of all Gods people, the meanest as well as the greatest have a share in the great things laid up in store for them all, which they all aspire to, and seek after, and in the end doe all enjoy, which is, *the end of their faith and hope, the salvation of their soules*; there is one Body, one Spirit, one hope of their calling.

Fourthly, They have all *one Lord*; one Lord, what is that? to interpret this aright, bee pleased to remember this one rule, that where-ever in the New Testament you find God, and Lord, both mentioned together, to signify distinct Persons, Lord always signifies

Jesus

Heb. 6. 18.

Iude 3.

Jesus Christ, as Mediator, as in 1 Cor. 8. and other places, there are gods many, and lords many, but we have but one God that is over all, and one Lord, by whom are all things, and we by him; so that by one Lord he there means, that all the Saints throughout the world have their addresse to God, only in the name and mediation of the same Lord Jesus Christ, they have but one Advocate, one Intercessor; one Mediator between God and them, and by whom alone are communicated to them all the good things, which come from God.

Then fifthly, they have all one faith, there is one Lord, and one Faith; I conceive that there by faith is not meant the grace of faith, (although if that be meant, as I shal shew you by and by, yet they have all that one faith) but there, he means by faith, the rule, Doctrine, and object of faith, the Doctrine which is beleaved, and signifies, that all the Saints throughout the world doe by faith receive, and beleve the selfe-same truths, which give them an interest in God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, & which carry them to eternal Salvation. Now because this seemes a little difficult, I must endeavour a little more fully to cleare it, then I have done any of the former: I say, all the members of Christ throughout the world have one faith; the meaning is, in every Age, and every corner of the world, where Christ hath any of his people, there are some common Doctrines, wherein Salvation is to be found, in which all Gods people doe agree, each of them beleaving, and receiving them for his particular; for although great Clerkes doe know and understand many truthe, which others are ignorant of; yea, and among the people of Christ there are great differences, and divisions in their opinions in many particular things of weight and concernment, yet if you sever the things, wherein they differ one from another, and set them aside, and gather into one symbol or summe those great truthe, wherein they all agree, there will be found so much truth imbraced by all the people of God, which wil bring them all to Salvation, being really beleaved, and answered with a holy conversation. For instance, looke this day into all the corners of the earth, East, West, North, and South, where the name of Christ is knowne and professed, the great fundamental Doctrines, which bring Salvation, are received by all the members of Christ. Truth is, there are in many places damnable Heresies superinduced, which, if received, the foundation is destroyed; but Christs Spirit in all the Saints either make
C them

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them see the danger of them, and abhor them, or else in mercy keep them ignorant of them, and so I doubt not but it is, even in the Church of Rome this day (among whom Christ wil have a people to be called out from among them, when that *Babylon* is to be destroyed) though their Doctrine in the grosse summe, as set forth in the Councel of *Trent*, wil not stand with Salvation, yet some latene members of Christs Church among them, doe through mercy see, and shun those things which are damnable, or are ignorant of that mystery of iniquity, and place all their hope of Salvation in Christ alone, and lead their lives in holinesse, according to their measure of Light received. The summe of all comes to this: That among all Christs people in the world, there is imbraced so much truth, as being accompanied with an answerable conversation, wil save them, and notwithstanding the remainders of their mistakes, errours, corruptions of judgement about lesser truthes, and corruptions in their conversations, we may comfortably say of them all, as the Apostle doth in the sixth of the *Galathians*, *As many as walk according to this rule, peace be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.* This is the fifth thing, that all the Saints in every corner of the world have *one faith*: and if also you would take *faith* for the *grace of faith*, whereby each for their part are united to Jesus Christ, which faith also is the principle of that Life of Grace, which the Saints lead in this world, (for *we live by faith*) in this also all Gods people in the world have the *same faith*, which is therefore called the faith of *Gods elect*, and the like *precious faith*; so they are *one body*, have *one Spirit*, *one hope of their calling*, *one Lord*, *one faith*.

Gal. 6. 16.

TITUS 1. 1.
2. Pet. 1. 1.

Then Gly, and they have all *one Baptism*, which is not to be taken literally, barely for the Sacrament of washing with water, but either it is taken, as some interpret it, for the Spiritual part of Baptisme, which is their new Birth, the washing away of their sins, and the washing of them with Gods Spirit; or rather, as it was the custom in the *Jewish Church*, to have all their Ordinances signified by circumcision (whence therefore, all who imbraced the *Jewes* manner of worship, are called the Circumcision) because it was the first Ordinance, and that which sealed them to all the rest; so I conceive he meanes by Baptisme, that as it is the first Ordinance, so it is here used to expresse all Gospel institutions, so that by *one Baptisme* he meanes, that Gods people all have the same Ordinances,

nances, or meanes for their edification, and building up in Christ.

And then lastly, they have *all one God, and father of all, who is above them all, and through them all, and in them all*, which signifies that they all have one God, which is their Sovereigne Lord, the Father, of whom originally are all things, and to whom alone, as supreme, all their addresses are made in the mediation of Christ, and in whom alone they all acquiesce, and rest, as their supreme good, and last end, and is therefore here said *to be above them all, and through them all, and in them all*; above all in regard of his Sovereignty, and divine Eminency; *through* them in regard both of his providentiall, and gracious administrations, and *in them all* in regard of his neare relation, and conjunction with them in Christ his Sonne; In all these seven things all the people of God throughout the world are *one*, they all of them have a state, standing and membership in the same body, they all are anoynted by the same Spirit, and all the gifts of the Spirit are intended for the good of them all, they all have the same common salvation, they all have their accessse to God in the name and mediation of the same Christ, and all doe imbrace the same common truths, they all live upon the same Gospel-ordinances, and administrations, and they all serve, and reverence, and seeke to enjoy and rest in one supreme God, who is *our* God, and the God of *our* Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in all these things they have copartnership, fellowship, and are herein as I may say, heires in *Gavel-kinde*. And let this be for the first question, viz. *What are the things wherein all the Saints and people of Christ are one?*

The second is, What are the bands that doe tye all the Saints, and people of Christ thus together? Surely, it must needs be some strange Genius of Government, that must be able to keep in *one* such infinite multitudes, so differing in their languages, in their birth, in their spirits, in their educations, in almost all things, wherein temperature or corruption can make men opposit, and contrary one to another; what strange band must it be, which can keep all these so united, that you may predicate all these seven things of every one of them.

I answer; the bands of them are not any politick tricks of mens devising; the Church of *Rome* saith, it is impossible the Church of Christ should be kept thus in unity, unlessse you allow some visible

Quest. 2.
What are the
bands of this
Union?

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head, that may have a visible government over all, and upon whose judgement and decision, all must depend; but we need not look after any such devices, the bands are of Jesus Christs own appointing and giving, which are these two.

Ans^w
First, The Spirit of Christ teaching and ruling them all.

The first is, his ho'y Spirit given to every one of them, which doth not only serve, as a band to tie them all to Christ their head, but this self-same Spirit is intended by Christ the head to be the band, that should tie them all one to another, and therefore it is said, *1 Cor. 12, 13. That we are all made to drinke into one Spirit*, that as we are all united into one head, so we are all made to drink into one Spirit: conceive it thus; The Lord Jesus being the quickning head of all his people, gives the self same Spirit (which resides in him without all measure) and pouring it out in what measure he pleaseth upon all his people; This Spirit makes them all so to understand his Laws, rules, and directions, that without any other Teachers (not excluding the use of his owne Ordinances, but any device or policy of men) he makes them all to understand what is the minde of their Lord, which are the duties imposed upon them by their Lord, and so enlightning their minds, and ruling their hearts, makes them conformable to all his good pleasure, and thereby keeps them all in this peace, and unity one with another. A most excellent instance you have of this in *Esa. 11.* where the Lord Christ is spoken of, *first*, as he is the head; and of him it is said there, *that he hath the spirit of wisdom, and the spirit of knowledge, and the spirit of the feare of the Lord*, signifying thereby how fitted and enabled he is to the worke, of being head of the Church, to ver. 5. then afterwards, ver. 6 &c. he tels you, how all his people shal be associated, and joyned together, that the Wolfe shal agree with the Lamb, the Leopard with the Kid, the Calf, and the young Lion, and a little child shal lead them, the Cow and the Bear, the sucking child and the Asp, the weaned childe, and the Cockatrice, none shal hurt other, that is, people, who before they came under Christs government, were as Lions, Beares, and Serpents one towards another, shal now all be united, and live in peace. What strange Discipline must it be, that can make Lions and Lambs, Tigers, and Cockatrices, and little Kids and Children, agree thus together? the reason of it is given in the ninth verse, *All the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord*; that is, that spirit of knowledge, which Jesus Christ is endow'd with, shal be poured out upon all the Lords people, and then

Esa. 11. 6, 7, 8.

then let them be of what nature or disposition they wil, as this Spirit prevailes, where he doth but informe them, that this or that is the minde of Christ, this Spirits teaching wil make them all of one minde, and all live in peace thus one with another : and this is the same, which the Lord elsewhere promiseth both in 11. of *Ezek.* and the 36. of *Ezek.* *I will put my spirit in them, and cause them to walke in my Statutes, and keep my Ordinances, and my Judgements, and doe them.* Now this band of the Spirit of Christ, is such a band of union, which none of all the heathen Philosophers, or Lawgivers, ever so much as dreamed of : *Plato, Lycurgus*, or any of them, who have framed plat-formes of Common-wealths, and propounded meanes, how all the subjects should be kept in concord and peace, could never once thinke of such a thing as this is ; but our Head the Lord Jesus hath both promised and done it.

Then secondly, there is another band, which is a secondary and subordinate band, and that is the grace of *Love*, the grace of Christian love, and charity, which in this place you are not to look upon only, as a particular grace, a branch of the Image of Christ, as all other saving graces are, but as a grace exalted by Christ to this peculiar office, that it should be the band to tie all the Lords people in one, and so the Scripture saith expressly of it.

The Apostle *Paul* having opened the conjunction of all the Saints in one body, 1 *Cor.* 12. doth in the latter end of the Chapter exhort them all to labour after the best gifts; which might edifie the Church; But behold (saith he) *I wil shew you a more excellent way:* a more excellent way then what? why a more excellent way for edification of the Church, then Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers, Governments, helps, take them all ; he would shew them an excellent way beyond all these : what is that? *the grace of love;* which he discourses of throughout the whole thirteenth Chapter, and tels you all miracles, all abilities to preach, all that it is possible for man to be endowed with, are not able to doe that good to the Church, which the grace of love doth. And the same Apostle *Paul*; *Col.* 3. when he had exhorted Gods people to seeke after, and put on all those graces, wherein the new creature stands, *Bowels of mercy, kindnesse, humblenesse of minde, &c.* adds ver. 14. *But above all put on love ;* why? *it is the band of perfection,* it is the perfect band, or the band that perfectly tyes all Gods people together. And therefore our Saviour Christ in *Iohn.* 13. 34. 35. makes

Ezek. 11. 19.
Ezek. 36. 27

2 Band, the
grace of love.

1 *Cor.* 12. 31.
and cap. 13

Col. 3. 14.

Ioh. 13. 34. 35.

Ephes. 4. 16

it the Livery of the Church, whereby in all places of the world they may be knowne to be his Disciples, even by their loving one another; and therefore also the Apostle in the fourth of the *Ephesians*, vers. 16. when he had shewed that every joynt contributes, and supplyes its part towards the building up of the whole body, concludes it thus; *by that which every joynt supplyeth according to the effectuall working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the building up of it selfe in love*; as if the grace of Love were the thing that ran through them all, and gave vigour and strength to them all, in their working one with another, and one for another. Thus you have heard what the things are, wherein all the Saints are one, and what the bands are, whereby they are thus united. Now before I proceed to the application, of necessity I must remove one great doubt out of the way: It may be

3 Q. How is it
then that the
Scripture speaks
of many Churches,
if all are
but one Church

said, If the Church of Christ be but *one Church*, whence comes it, that wee read mention of so many Churches, of a *Triumphant Church*, and a *Militant Church*, of a *visible*, and an *invisible Church*, of the Church at *Jerusalem*, the *Churches of Judea*, the *Churches of Galatia*, the *seven Churches*, all the *Churches* where the Scripture doth mention so many Churches, how are these expressions reconciled with this, that all Gods people are but one Church?

Ansiv.

I answer; First, it is most cleare, that Jesus Christ hath but one mystical Church, which is his body; the Church of Christ is as we say in Logick, *Species specialissima*, it cannot be sub-divided into other Churches, if we wil speake properly; but though it be but *one Body*, one reall individuall Church, yet this one Church is capable of severall distributions, from some properties, or qualities, or adjuncts which are found in it, and those distributions, or considerations of it, doe, and may in some sence obtaine the name of the Church. To give you a little taste, the Church of Christ, though it be but one, yet it is sometimes considered, distributed, or distinguished according to the *manner*, and the *measure* of the communion, which the parts and members inioy with their Head, thus; one part of this Church inioyes communion with the Head by *sight*, and not by *faith*, and the communion which they have with Christ is *perfect*, freed from all imperfections, or infirmities, or crosses, in this respect these members are called the *triumphant Church*. Another part of the same Church hath communion with Christ by *faith*,

faith, and not by sight, and the communion which it enjoys with him is imperfect in all the Graces, and mingled with corruptions, temptations, and afflictions, in respect whereof this part of the Church is called the Militant Church, but all these are not two Churches, but one Church, only one part of it hath shot the Gulse, and is at rest, and the other is in another condition here upon earth.

Secondly, that part of it which is upon earth, in regard that the very life and being of it, and of all the members of it, lye in *internal Graces*, which cannot be seen, in that respect the Church of Christ is called an *invisible Church*; but now as the same Church and Members doe make an outward profession of their faith, and obedience, sensibly to the eyes and eares of others, in that respect it is called a *visible Church*; but the visible is not one Church, and the invisible another Church, but meerly the same Church under severall denominations, the one from their constituting Graces, the other from the external profession of them: How men, who have no Grace, come to be accounted a part of the Church, I shal endeavour to expound afterwards.

Or, Thirdly, take it thus; the selfe-same Church of Christ at one time hath been trained up under one kind of outward administration, and forme of worship and Government, one before Christs Incarnation, and that is called the Church of the *Jewes*; since Christs time there is another Administration, and thence it comes to be called the Church of the *Gentiles*: but *Jewes* and *Gentiles* before and since Christs incarnation, are but one Church; so likewise you may read that Jesus Christ, though he have but one Church, yet he hath appointed that the multitude of those, who profess his Name, for their better *discipline, instruction*, and *edification*, should be ranged, and ranked, and ordered into *particular assemblies*; now in regard of this Marshalling, and Disciplining of them, these severall Associations, or Congregations make so many Churches, but these Churches are not severall bodies of Christ, but only parts of his one body; as in a great Army the number of all, who have listed their name in the Muster-role, are all under one *Generall*, and all under some *generall Officers*, but yet for their better ordering, there is this Brigade, this Regiment, or that Troop, or that Company, and every one of these under some meaner Officers, yet all of these taken together are all but one Army, so is it in

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in the Church. I might adde, that sometimes these severall associations are distinguished and known by the outward confessions which they make of their faith, and in that respect you have in our dayes the Churches of the Reformation, the *Protestants*, and the *reformed Protestants*, and these againe according to some of their confessions are purer, and holier then others. And just as it is in a great building, some rooms (it may be) are more light and glorious, and some of them more dark, and it may be some of them have more weak timber, and other materials, then the rest, and yet all of them are but parts of the self-same house.

So I say, all these, *triumphant, militant, Jews, Gentiles, visible, invisible*, the *severall Churches* in the severall quarters of the world, in the East, West, North, and South, all these, or rather the members of Christ in all these taken together, doe make up that one Church of Christ, which is his *Body*, his *Spouse*, his *Kingdome*, his *City*, his *Vine*, his *Love*, his *Dove*, his *Turtle*, *his only one of her mother*.

Now, whether this Church of Christ, that is thus one, be authorised to meet in her representatives to make Lawes, and to exercise Discipline? whether it be the first subject of the Keys, whether the government of particular Congregations flow from this Church to the rest? or whether any wayes at all it may doe any judicial, or judiciary act, is a most noble question, and much disputed amongst learned Divines, especially in our latter age; my haste doth not allow me to meddle with that controversie, only thus much I may safely asser: :

1 That all the Officers, Offices, and gifts, that Christ gave, when he ascended up into heaven, he gave them all to this Church, and they all serve for the gathering, edifying, and perfecting of this Church.

2 And as any ever were, or are converted to Christ from the world, they are all primarily added to this Church.

3 Yea, and all, whether particular Christians, or numbers of Christians associated, all are to act, as parts of this Church, and consequently in reference to the good of this whole Church, all having such relation to, and dependance upon this Church, as parts have to the whole: and a standing in a particular Church-relation doth no more take off from duties to this great body, which is the great Common-wealth, then the *Jewes* being ranked under their severall Tribes,

Tribes, or in their particular Cities, were taken off from the duties, which they owed to the whole Common-wealth of *Israel*, &c. that therefore he who is justly (*clave non errante*) excommunicated, or cast out of any particular Church, is cast out from all Churches, as he who is shut out of any one Gate of a City, is shut out of every ward of that City, yea, out of the whole City it selfe. Having thus farre cleared the Doctrinall part, I now proceed to the application of it, and there are many excellent uses, which this Lesson doth afford, I shal handle only two at this time, 1. for instruction, 2. For duty.

Application.

First for instruction, from all this it appeares, that to be a Member of the Church of Christ, or the Association of all Gods people into this one body, is the only desirable good Fellowship, and Society in this world. You shal read of a great many other Fellowships, and Co-partnerships: you may read in the first of the *Proverbs* of a fellowship of Theeves, in *Isa.* 56. of a company of Drunkards, in *Psal.* 2. of a Society of Malignants, and abundance of several companies, and societies of men there are, some joyned for pleasure, some for profit, and many glory, and take great content in the society, and fellowship, and fruit they enjoy, in those whom they are linked with: but ah! beloved, when things are rightly viewed, it will appeare, that the Congregation, or the Society of the Church of the first borne, whose names are written in Heaven, wherein all the Saints of God from the beginning of the world to the end of it, are all joyned in one body, all of them united to Christ, and one to another, having the same Spirit, the same Lord, the same hope, all of them one in all these seven things, which I have opened to you; it will, I say, one day appeare, this is the only desirable society under Heaven. Let them therefore, who are men of other societies, glory as much as they please in their supposed good Fellowship, when in the meane time they are strangers from the Common-wealth of *Israel*; But let us count our selves happy, that we have a part and lot in this communion, wherein we have Fellowship *not only one with another, but with the Father, and his Sonne Jesus Christ.*

1 Instruction.
Therefore this communion of Saints is that brotherly good fellowship.
Prov. 1. 14.
Esa. 56. 1. 2.
Psal. 2. 2.

Secondly, it hence also followes for our instruction, That none in all the world are, or ought to be judged Members of the Church of Christ, but only those that have the *Spirit* of Jesus Christ in them, really regenerate, really holy, really united to Christ the

2 Instruction.
Therefore none are true members of this Church, but regenerate men.

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Head, these and no other are Members of the Church, which is Christs Body, which is a Lesson of very great use. You all know there is at this day much disputing, about what things are requisite to make men Church-members; some very learned men maintain, That to make a man admittable into Christs Church, or to make him a Church-member, no more is in the Scripture required, but only, that he *give up his name*, and professe, that he is willing to learne the wayes of Christ, and to walke in them; the Church of Christ being, say they, appointed as a Schoole, to traine Schollars up, into which are admitted not only those that are Learned, but those who are willing to learne.

Others say, That is too laxe, if you wil own a man, as a Church-member, he must be able to *give you an account of his faith*, and a *promise of a voluntary subjection* to the Gospel of Christ for time to come, and if they come to that, then you may take them in; and owne them, as Church-members.

Others say, You must yet goe further, unlesse you can in the *judgement of your owne charity conceive*, that the *works of Grace is really wrought in their hearts*, you are not to owne them, or joyne with them, if you can probably hope that, then you may take them in.

Others will goe yet further, and say, These things are not sufficient, for unlesse there be a right admission by *Baptisme*, when you make your first confession, all the rest is in vaine, and upon these points we dispute, till we have disputed our selves into a thousand peeces.

Now Brethren, be pleased to know, that though there be good use of these debates, to direct us to know the persons, with whom we may exercise the acts of communion in the wayes and worship of Christ, yet none of all these rise up, to prove a man to be a Member of the Church of Jesus Christ; there are indeed signes, and rules, that may teach us, with whom we may joyne in visible and external Fellowship, and whom we may reject, or cast out, if they be taken in; but these are not rules to make us know, who are reall Members of the Church of Christ; indeed as the Church is denominated from some external things, these rules direct us to judge with whom, and to whom we may communicate in those external things, but these are clearly two Distinct questions, *with whom we may joyne in visible and externall communion*, and *who*

are truly Members of this Church of Christ, Of the latter there is but one note, and that is, if they be united to Christ the Head, have the quickning Spirit of Christ in them, and the grace of Love wrought in them, which note is *invisible*, and not external, and can be knowne only in our owne Consciences; if this be wanting, let men carry themselves never so wel, so that all the people of Christ under heaven should owne them, yet Jesus Christ owne them not, and you may truly say, that all they, who have not communion with *God the Father, and the Lord Jesus, and his holy Spirit,* I Joh. 1. 3. have no *reall* communion with the Saints; therefore let no man rest, or pride himselfe in being joynd in this, or that Church-fellowship, a carnal, or unconverted man, whatsoever his outward shape or mould be in his profession, that man for his Spiritual standing belongs to another Corporation.

There are two great Spiritual corporations, the one is, that whereof Christ is the Head; the other is, the corporation of Hel, whereof the Devil is the Prince; now all men, let them be of what Profession they wil, if they be not under Christ the Head, they belong to another corporation, and their external visible profession alters not their Spiritual relation. A lump of *Lead*, whilst it is in the lump, it is a lump of *base Metall*, called *Lead*, melt this, and mould it into the forme of a Beast, what is it then? it is but a *leaden* Beast; melt it, and mould it againe into the forme of a man, it is but a *leaden* man; melt it, and mould it againe, into the forme of an Angel, it is but a *leaden Angel*: So I say, take a carnal Man, an unregenerate Man, he is a carnal man, whilst he professeth no Religion; suppose him then, to professe himselfe a *Protestant* at large, he is but a *carnall* Protestant; suppose him next, to joyne himselfe into some Church Order, let him joyne with those that are called of the *Presbyterian way*, he is a *carnall* Presbyterian. Take him off from that, put him into the *Congregational way*, what is he then? a *carnal* congregational man; joyne him next if you wil, to those, who deny our Baptisme, he is then but a *carnal* Anabaptist, he is still a carnal, an ungodly man, belonging to the corporation of Satan, whatsoever his out-side be; and know ye all for certain, that no Bastard, no Gibeonite, no Hypocrite, no man unconverted, what gifts soever he may have, what reputation soever he may have amongst men, he is *no member of the Church of Christ*, unless the Spirit of Christ be in him. I say therefore againe, beare not your

selves too much upon your visible Church-standing, as too many doe; beleeve it, its an easie thing for the children of the world to put on an outward forme of Church-communion: but O! how hard is it to become a new creature, to resigne up it selfe wholly to Jesus Christ, and the guidance of his holy Spirit? and I presse this the more upon this account also, viz. were this well understood; it would satisfie, and cure the mistake of many, who thinke, that there are the same rules to direct us, with whom we must exercise our external communion, as there is to judge with whom Jesus Christ exercises his communion; no, no; we may exercise outward acts of communion, by the appointment of God, with those unto whom Jesus Christ never communicates himselfe, nor his Spirit.

3 Instruction.
I therefore the
most usefull
Christians are
the most noble
members.

Thirdly, one instruction more, which I doe but name from all this, That the Church of Christ is but one Body: it followes plainly, that therefore among all the great multitudes of the Members of the Church, they are the honourablest, and noblest Members, who are most useful for the common good of the Church, as it is in a Natural body, the Liver that makes bloud for all the body; the Heart, that makes spirits for all the body; the Stomach, that digests meat for all the body; and the Eye, which sees for the whole body, &c. these are counted the noblest, and excellentest: So among all Christians, the man, or men, who are most useful, best fitted for use, and laid out for use, these wil one day be found, and acknowledged the honourablest Members of the Church of Christ, what esteeme soever the world hath of them.

2 Use for exhortation.
1 Therefore
there must be
no Schisme in
the Church,
1 Cor. 12. 25

But the maine use, which I purpose, and which indeed we most need, is to shew what duties doe arise from this unity of the Saints in one body, and they are two, which the Apostle *Paul* layes downe, in the first of the *Corinthians*, the twelfth chap. vers. 25. when he had shewed, how the Lord had framed all his people into one body, he then tels us, to what end and purpose all this was done, viz.

First, *That there should be no schisme in the body.*

Secondly, *That therefore all the members ought to have the like care one of another.*

The first of these I purpose with the Lords assistance to speake somewhat to at this time, *because all the Church, the Saints, the people of God in all the world are but one body, therefore rents, and divisions are most unnaturall, and destructive to it.* I hope
you

you will all judge it a necessary and seasonable Theam, it being almost our epidemical disease, we being rent and torne into multitudes of sects and divisions, which this doctrine of the unity of the Church of Christ doth utterly condemn, and therefore though I know it is an unpleasing subject, and possibly many may give me small thanks for it, yet truly I durst not (being called to this place) but cast in my mite towards the healing of this wofull distemper; and three things I shall endeavour to cleare about it :

First, What Schisme is, and what is the nature of it :

Secondly, the greameffe of it, what a horrible sin it is :

What Schisme is.

And thirdly, and principally, I will labour to shew you, who they are, that are guilty of it.

For the first, what it is, Its usually defined to be a rash or unjust separation in matters of Religion, but I would rather describe it to be a *renting, violating, dissolving, or breaking of that unity, which ought to be amongst Christians, or amongst all the Saints of Christ.*

And this rending or breaking of this union properly lyes in two things; one is *inward*, and that is dissolving or breaking the band, or bands, which the Lord hath given to tye them all together, which band on our part (as you have heard before) is *the grace of love*, and therefore the breaking off of love among Christians, whether it be from all the Church, or from a particular Church, yea, or from a particular man; I say, the dissolving or breaking of this spirituall band, hath in it the very intrinsecall nature of the sinne of Schisme, the Lord having appointed *that grace* to be the band to tye his people together; but because the inward band is invisible, and therefore not easie to judge of, therefore there is a second thing in Schism, and that is, a denying, or with-drawing from the exercise of those things, which Christ hath given, as the *symboles* or *pledges* of love amongst his people, as converting together, praying together, hearing together, conferring together, receiving Sacraments, and the like together; the with-drawing from these, or the denying of these, otherwise then Jesus Christ directs in his Word. These things are visible, and therefore Divines use to appropriate the name of Schism to such with-drawings, or denyings, which indeed are but the fruites of the other : for the dissolving of the band of love, is the root of the disease, and the denying of the expressions, and exercise of love are the bitter fruites growing from that evill root; So then, he, or

they, who ever they are, that do deny to exercise, or with-draw from the exercise of those things, which Jesus Christ hath made to bee both duties, and pledges of love among his people, are truly and properly guilty of the sin of Schism; the nature of this sin of Schism lying properly in this, that it is against *Christian love*; and hereby also you may learne the difference between Hereſie and Schisme; Hereſie is a false opinion, which destroyes *faith*, but *Schisme* is either an opinion, or practice against charity. The first of them, which is against faith, tends to rend off from Christ the head. The second, which is against love, tends to the rending off from the body; This for the nature of it.

2 The greatness of the sin of Schisme.

In the next place, let us consider the greatnesse of this sin, and the rather, because in truth, the name and charge is grown so common amongst us, (as formerly the name of Puritan was) that many make no account of it, whether they be charged justly, or unjustly with it; but who ever considers of it, according to the sense of the Scripture, will find that the sin of Schisme is a most hainous sin; The greatness of it not easily set forth in words; whether you consider it in the nature of it, or the effects of it. In

In the nature of it.

Eph. 1. 10
Joh. 17. 21

1 The nature of it; its contrary to one of the highest ends of Christs great undertaking, which is, that all his people should bee one, he dyed to that end, to make them one with himselfe, and one with one another, he begged it of his Father, that they should be one; now this sinne tends to frustrate this great designe of Jesus Christ.

1 Tim. 1. 5

And secondly, It is contrary to all the Commandements of Christ, for all the Commands, which he hath given to his people for the ordering of their conversation, himselfe tels us, That *the end of the Commandement is love*; 2 If we consider the effects of it, they are most dreadful and mischievous:

2 In the effects of it.

For first, it is wonderfully dishonourable to Jesus Christ; for whereas he holds out to all the world, that his people are *one house, one body, one city*, which is at unity, compacted together, &c. this is a publick confutation of it, makes *Jerusalem* appeare as a *Babel*, a City of confusion, a Kingdome divided, wherein is nothing but *disorders*, and *tumults*, and the like.

And as it is dishonourable to Christ, so it wonderfully hinders and destroyes the *edification* of the Church, both the edification of them, who make the Schisme, and the edification of them, from whom

whom the rent is made, depriving them of that spiritual good they might, and should receive and supply from, and to one another; for though Iesus Christ the head, be the only fountaine of our spiritual life, yet it is as true that Christs usuall way of exercising, strengthening, increasing, and perfecting it, is in the fellowship of the body, *that by what every joyn supplies, the whole may be increased*; so that if we weigh it seriously, we must conclude, That as nothing within the bounds of the Church more argues a conformity to the spirit of the Gospel, then the study of unitie, peace, and concord, so few things more argue an opposition to Christs worke, and his peoples good, then this spirit of division. Eph. 4. 16.

But the third is the greatest question, who are guilty of it? and 3 Who are before I enter upon this discovery, give me leave to premise this, that guilty of it, in our dayes it is in this point of Schisme, as it was of old in the primitive Church in the first point of Heresie: what opinions the Ancients would make odious, they would brand with the name of *Heresie*, and thereby sometimes very truths of Christ were condemned, as *Heresies*; so it is at this day in the point of Schisme, the Papists cry downe all, who professe Christianity through the whole world as Schismatics, who joyn not with, and subject not unto the Church of *Rome*. The *Prelatical* party usuall account all Schismatics who are not under the Church-government of Bishops; come among them who are for the *Presbytery*, many of them call all Schismatics, who joyn in any other way: the *Congregational men*, (as they are called) have the same esteeme of them who depart from them, and goe into another way; I premise this, only for this end, that you may hence conclude, that doubtlesse sometimes the name is given, where it should not be given.

Who are guilty of the sin of Schisme.

Now let us returne to our Question, *Who they are that are guilty?*

Ans. Truly with sorrow I must reply, It is a hard thing to say in our sad dayes who is not guilty, as in Common-wealths, where the bands and sinews of Civil government are cut alunder, & no conjunction, or associating of a people into or under government; Politicians say, that in such times, *Every man is at war with every man, every man is an enemy to every man*; so the Lord for our sinnes hath poured this evil upon us, that we lye in confusion, almost every man is divided from every man, and so deep hath the malady taken root, that many are in love with it, and like their very divisions;

Ans. I. In generall most Christians this day are guilty of it.

visions; and as it is in popular tumults *no man will heare any man*, but still the confused noyle goes on; so in truth is it with us, we are not willing to heare of agreement, he is almost an enemy, who would labour a pacification, or reconciliation. The Lord have mercy upon us, our divisions are very great and sad; but as a generall declaiming against sin, never converted a man from sin, untill he bee convinced that himself be guilty of this or that sin; so my declaiming against Schisme in generall wil not heal it, until I discover more particularly, who they are that are guilty of it. And to this I answer first negatively, all departure, separation, and denying to joyn in Ordinances from some such, as call themselves Christians, is not Schisme; the *Israelites* separation from *Jeroboams* Calves was no Schisme, if the faith of a people be *heretical*, or their *worship be idolatrous*: the Lord bids his servants *come out from such a people*.

This opened more particularly.
Negatively.
All separation is not Schisme, such as are Schismatics, who separate from Heretics, or Idolaters.
Or from persecutors.

I adde further, that although the faith of a Church be sound, and the worship pure for the substance, yet if that Church, or Company, wil presse some such things, which others cannot practise without sin, and which unlesse they will practise (though against their consciences) they must be under intollerable persecution, as losse of state, life, &c. or spirituall anathematisme, unjust excommunications, or the like, to with-draw from such a people (provided that still they will retaine those truths which are held by that persecuting Church, and be ready to perform what Christian duty of love lyes in their power towards them) this with-drawing is no Schism, it is no more then Christ and his Disciples did to the Church of *Jerusalem*, and no more then the Lord hath bid his people do, when they are persecuted in one place, to with-draw and flye to another.

2 I answer positively, they who are guilty of the sin of Schisme may be reduced under two heads:

Some are guilty of Schisme from their principles of judgement; their principles of judgement carry them to the practice of that which is a rending of the Church.

Others, though their principles of judgement be right, yet are Schismaticall, through principles of a corrupt *heart* and *spirit*; I shall speake to both these, but principally to the first sort.

First, all those whose erroneous judgements make them Schismaticall (as I conceive) may all be brought to these foure.

First, Independency properly so called, is one of the highest principles of Schisme, all such Christians, whether they be *single persons* or

Some are Schismatics from principles of an erroneous judgement, some from principles of a corrupt heart. Schismatics from corrupt judgement are

Independents properly so called.

or *associated bodies*, yea, though all the Christians in a Nation, associated into a body, doe looke upon themselves as absolute, and independent from the rest of the Church of Christ, with whom the rest of the Church of Christ hath nothing to doe; this I say, is one of the highest principles of Schisme in the world: but doe not mistake me, I know there are some called, and branded with the name of Independency, who professe they abhor both the name and thing, I meane such, as conceive that a particular Church hath all power in it selfe, and that no other assembly can authoritatively call them to an account, so as to dissolve their sentences, or excommunicate them, because they conceive, that the government of the Church is not placed in Synods, or in any other Assembly, then that of a particular Congregation; yet readily acknowledge that themselves are but part of the Church, and ought to be countable to the Church of Christ for their wayes, and that, if upon brotherly counsel given by other Churches, they reforme not, they may and ought to with-draw from all Christian communion with them: whether their way of being countable be right or no, I dispute not, only I say, this is not the Independency here intended; but I meane any man, or company of men, who looke upon themselves, as an intire Civil State, or Common-wealth lookes upon it selfe, how small soever it be (as in *Italy*, there are some such, which containe not above one City or two) yet they count all the world hath nothing to do with them, nor are they to be countable to any other State, no not to the whole world, any further then their owne interest carries them, either for their owne safety, or as they make use of them; this is true State independency; so is it here when any persons, or company of Christians looke upon themselves, as *totum quid seorsum*, as men by themselves, and in their intentions, carry not themselves as parts of the great Common-wealth, accounting it a thing little or nothing materiall, so they professe the Name, and faith of Christ, and serve him, whether they doe it in the communion of the Catholick Church, or out of it, as if they were not persons contained within the whole, or part of the same Common-wealth, this, I say, is high and deep Schism; the very nature of Christs Church, being one Body, requires, that whatsoever any, whether persons or Churches do in matters of Religion, *teaching, or being taught, praying, fasting, Almes-giving, in word, and Sacraments*, yea, in belee-

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ving, loving, hoping, &c. should all be done intentionally with relation to, and communion with the whole Church of Christ; this first principle lies deep rooted, many live by it, though few wil own it.

2 All who renounce all other Churches because not of their own manner of constitution.

2 Others are deeply schismatical from principles of judgement, who are so farre in love with their own constitution, or way of Association into Church-Order, that they condemne all the other Assemblies throughout the world, as no Churches of Christ, because they be not modelled and moulded according to the Plat-form of their own particular Church-order, and association. I doe not deny, but it is possible that some of Gods people may have some such great mistakes lye upon them, that they cannot possibly joyne in all Christian ordinances with any congregation in the world: as the converted Christian *Jewes*, while they were under that apprehension that no man ought to be owned, but he that was circumcised; I say, as long as that errour possist them, they could never joyn in all Ordinances with the rest of the *Gentiles*; and how farre the rest of the people of God should beare with such, and still own them as Christs servants, is a thing worth the studying, but certainly the principle it selfe is most destructive to the unity of the Church. To refrain fellowship and communion with such Churches, or Companies, who professe Christ their Lord, whose faith is sound, whose worship is Gospel-worship, whose lives are holy, unlesse they will come into that very particular way of Church order, which they have pitched upon, is a dreadfull renting of the Church of Christ to peeces; for if all Christs people in the world are one body, and all thereby bound to have communion one with another, then certainly that principle, which necessitates men to cast off (it may be) nine hundred ninety nine parts of a thousand, must needs be dangerous, and Schismatical; of this none are so guilty, as the Church of *Rome*, who circumscribe the Church of Christ within the precinct of the *Roman* Jurisdiction, and cast off all Christians, and all Churches in the East, West, North, and South, yea, cast them off from all hope of Salvation, who subject not themselves to their way. 2. Nor can our rigid Separatists bee any way excused, who censure and condemne all other Churches, whatever their faith, worship, and conversation be, meerly because they are not gathered into Church-order, according to their own patternes. This so strict bounding of our christian communion by outward formes, I humbly conceive
hath

Of which the Papists are most guilty.

hath been a great, and almost generall fault among the Churches of *Europe* ever since the Reformation : in some Churches, the *large forme* of the confession of their faith is made the *Shibboleth*; without owning, and subscribing to this, without abating of a title, no communion to be enjoyed ; in other Churches, without conforming to their *formes of Prayers, Rites, and Ceremonies* in administration of the Sacraments, no communion to be enjoyed ; in others without submitting to their *forme of Church-government*, no communion ; and with these, of whom I now speake, without submitting to their manner and *forme of gathering* into Church-fellowship, none to be owned, or acknowledged to be Churches of Christ . but alas ! how little is to be found in Scripture to bound our fellowship and communion of Saints by any of these things ? In the Scripture, Churches are cryed up or downe, commended and blamed, according as their *fundamentall faith* was found, and their lives holy ; and I doubt not but one day, we shall all judge those Churches the best, whose substantiall faith is soundest, and lives most holy, whether their first manner of gathering were every way regular or not. Suppose that in an Army, the Lawes of that Army were, That none should be *prest* to serve, but all to come in as *Volunteers*, that their Officers should bee so and so chosen, and qualified ; now suppose in this Army should be found some Souldiers, who at first were *forced* in, or Officers, who came *corruptly* by their places ; suppose whole Troops or Companies of these, who yet being in, prove as *good Souldiers*, as *faithfull, skilfull valiant* for the Cause, as any other, it may be, beyond any others, think you these would not be owned by the Army, when they should be found such ? Or, suppose in *Marriage*, at the first the Parties *marry*, while not of years of *discretion*, or to *please Parents*, or the like, yet afterward come to love, and live in their *Marriage-relation* according to the Word, thinke wee these shall not be owned as Husband and Wife ? so is the case here : Let mee for present suppose these men, or Churches, to whom I speake, to be at their first gathering according to the purest patterne ; and let mee also suppose another Company irregularly joyned, it may be forced in, and that also whilst they are *ignorant, prophane*. &c. and that their Minister also was put upon them ; now if the Lord please to worke upon those effectually, so that Minister and people grow sound in the faith, holy in their lives, pure in their worship, zealous for the truth ; when possi-

sibly they who boast of their first joyning, are grown like *Sardis*, to have a name to be alive, and yet are dead, &c. shal we thinke the Lord Jesus wil not owne the other before themselves? yes doubtlesse, and so should all his people; give me leave to adde one thing more; That the notion of making the first gathering of people into Church-fellowship, to be the rule to direct us with whom we may joyne, or not joyne; this I say, may make us refuse some Churches, upon whom are apparently seen the *Scripture-Characters* of a Golden Candlestick, and imbrace communion with others, only upon a *humane* testimony or report; for in that Church above mentioned, I may see a visible profession of soundnesse in faith, and holinesse there; in the other, *men* only tell me, the *first* were not orderly gathered, and the others were; to conclude this branch, this principle of renouncing all Churches for want of a supposed orderly gathering, or for want of some such desirable perfection, which themselves enjoy, is so dangerous and schismatical, that I feare not to say, that it is more lawful to have a Church-*standing* in the corruptest Church in the world, where salvation and life may be obtained, by the doctrine held out, and the way profest in that Church, though there should be very many frailties, and corruptions amongst them, then with that company, how holy soever it seemes to be, that wil necessitate such as joyne with them, to renounce communion with all the rest of the Body of Jesus Christ upon earth.

3. All who refuse communion with persons erring in points not fundamentall.

Thirdly, another principle of Schism, and which I conceive to be of larger, and of farre greater extent, and may make a fairer plea for it selfe, then yet any named, is, that which shuts up many servants of Christ, that they cannot joyne, nor afford Christian communion unto others for some particular errors found in their profession of faith, or some frailties found in their conversation. I say, that principle which makes the *servants* of Christ deny communion to them, to whom *Christ* wil not deny communion, to *interdict* communion with them, with whom Christ doth not *interdict* communion, is a renting principle. Conceive my meaning in a plaine comparison. Suppose in a Corporation, there were some rules given by their Charter and Founder, concerning their infranchizement, that whosoever is so, and so qualified, shal be a Free-man; if that Corporation, or any number shal deny freedome to any so qualified, or shal disfranchise any for any offence, for wch the Charter where-

whereby they all stand, doth not warrant them, they are guilty of rending their Charter, and they usurpe a power not given them by their founder; so is it in the Church, let me give a few instances; Take the Churches in the Apostles time, some of them did think it utterly unlawful to eat any meat that had been offered to an Idol, some did think all days were alike, some thought that it was utterly unlawful to eat any thing, but herbes, &c. Suppose now that the number of those, who held these opinions, should have gone to the rest of the Church, and said, *You are too lax in your principles, unlesse you will renounce that carnall, ungodly liberty, which you take, to eat in Idols temples, or to eat meat that hath been offered to an Idol, &c. we professe we must renounce communion with you*, they had been Schismatics in doing so. If on the other side the Church had called them, and said, *You by your strict opinions cut short the liberty Christ hath purchased for us by his blood, unlesse you lay aside these conceits of yours, we cast you out*, then the Schisme had laine on their part; because the Charter of Christianity hath provided, that for these things the people of God should not rent one from another, but bear one with another, that thereby they might heale one another. Rom. 14. 3, 4.
10, &c.

Come a little nearer our own times, Take the Reformed Churches, as now they stand, all the Churches of *France* and *Geneva*, though they be sound in their faith, yet generally they are against the divine institution of the Lords day.

Goe to *Helvetia* amongst the *Switzers*, generally the Churches there are against all Divine-right of any Church-government, and require nothing but the help of the Magistrate to keep their people in order.

Go from them, if you wil among the *Lutherans*, among them are many (as we judge) dangerous opinions, the Arminian points, and besides them, Consubstantiation, and the ubiquity of Christs body, and the like. The like might be said in many particulars of the *Swedes* and *Danes*; all these Churches being sound in the fundamentals, and owned by Christ, ought also to own one another; there are indeed some doctrines, wherein if men or Churches be not sound, the Lord Christ wil have nothing to do with them, or if a Churches worship be Idolatrous, the Lord Christ wil not hold communion with them; but there are some errors in doctrines, and corruptions in conversation, for which (though Christ like them not) he doth

not reject them; apply this to our purpose. At this day the *Soci-nians* deny the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Deity of the Holy Ghost, the Trinity of Persons, they deny that Jesus Christ hath merited, or satisfied for his people, these doctrines overthrow our Christianity, and we count the holders of these to have nothing with Christians in common, but only the name, therefore we renounce them.

The Papists also, besides some fundamentall errors, as justification by the merit of our owne workes, &c. are most abominably Idolatrous in their worship, and the Lord therefore bids us *come out from them*; but take all the rest of the Churches of Christ in Europe, and I humbly conceive that we ought, and must owne them to be Churches of Christ; and therefore when the *Calvinists*, and the *Lutherans* had had many disputes, to see if they could fetch off one another from their principles, and could not do it, the *Calvinists* even the holiest, and learnedst of them, such as *Calvin*, *Beza*, *Martyr*, *Zanchy*, *Vrsin*, *Pareus*, have offered to owne them as brethren, as Churches of Christ, and would have been willing to heare them, to receive Sacraments with them: the rigid *Lutherans* refused it, and cry out, *From communion with the Calvinists, Good Lord deliver us*: Now say I, the Schisme was on the *Lutherans* part: if the *Lutherans* had offered it, and the *Calvinists* had rejected, the Schisme had laine on the *Calvinists* part.

Bring it yet nearer, many of these opinions are got in among us, especially about free-will, Infant-baptisme, formes of Church-government, &c. and we should not refuse communion with any of them (supposing their lives unblameable.) If they will hold communion with us; I say, *if they will*, for ordinarily croneous persons are proud, and must have all mens sheaves bow down to theirs, and will close only with teachers and companies according to their owne lusts, but if we in a spirit of Christian love would have peace, and they refuse it, then both the error and schisme lyeth at their doore.

First objection
against this
third branch.

But against all this, it may be, and is objected: What a speckled bird would you make a particular church? Suppose the church you should be an Officer unto, should be such a medley, of some holding the morality of the Lords day, some denying it, some for Infant-baptisme, some condemning it, some like the Presbyterian government, others are for the Episcopal, others like a Congregational better then
either

either of them; some would have their children baptised, others are utterly against it, some of them *Calvinists*, some *Lutherans*, to have a Church made up of all these, would not this be a reproach to you to be a Pastor to such a flock?

To which I answer; what reproach would it be to me to be Pastor of such a Church as Jesus Christ is a head of? If the Church of Christ, wherein his Spirit rules, to whom he is a head, and which shal be saved, be made up of all these, what reproach (if prejudice did not blinde mens eyes) could it be to any of us, to have such members to be members of our Congregations?

Ans.

But doe you then intend a toleration of all these opinions? would you have *Lutherans*, and *Anti-sabbatarians*, *Anabaptists*, and others tolerated among us?

Object. 2.

I answer first, what the Magistrates office is about toleration, or non-toleration, I have nothing to doe to meddle with at this time; my doctrine confines me to speake only of Church forbearance, and upon that account.

Ans.

I answer, if by toleration, you meane an approbation of these, God forbid, we must approve of no errour, we should all seeke to make one another imbrace every truth of Christ; But if by toleration you meane a not cutting them off, unlesse they lay downe their errors and renounce them, that indeed I plead for, we should hold Christian communion with them, for Christ thus beares with them, and will have us beare one with another; and as it is in our naturall body, if a man have an ulcer in his hand or his leg, if ordinary medicines wil not cure it, he wil wait till the strength of nature work out the humour, or till by the providence of God, he can light of some more happy medicines, then yet have been propounded, but he will not cut his hand or his leg off, so long as it may be any wayes useful to him; so is the case here.

Thirdly, Some will yet object, indeed if you meane to bear with them for a while, till the truth hath been set before them, that they have all means of conviction, it wil be granted; but suppose all paines have been taken, the truth hath been propounded, they have been reasoned with, and they still hold the same, then they may be judged obstinate and self-condemned.

Object. 3.

I answer plainly, *faith*, as it is the imbracing of any particular truth is as well the gift of Gods Spirit, as that faith whereby we receive Christ for our Saviour, no wil dome, or thethoricke of man can ever make

Ans.

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make a man receive the faith of any one doctrine of Christianity, till Gods Spirit inable him, and it is a far easier matter to *non-plus* a man in disputing, then it is to clear his understanding, and inable him to receive a truth; and when such persons do appeal to the searcher of hearts, that it is meer want of light which hinders them from being of one minde, our Christian love (which ever judgeth the best) should rest satisfied, especially when their lives are unblameable, we must not take upon us to be Lords of their faith; and therefore after many disputes and conferences between the dissenting Churches in *Germany*, when they were not able to dispute one another out of their principles (as I before noted) the *Calvinists* propounded to hold an amicable Christian communion one with another; and if in a fair debating way they could afterward satisfie one another, well and good, in the meane time they would wait, till Christ would give more light: and upon this account, the *Calvinists* and *Lutherans* in *Polonia* doe at this day live in concord, both of them retaining their opinions.

And in truth, we all professe to doe the same toward them; for I hardly know any amongst us, but confesse the *Helvetians*, *Lutherans*, &c. are true Churches, notwithstanding their errours: Now (say I) shal a company associated in such, and such opinions, be counted a true Church? and shal not a particular man, who holds the same points, be counted a true visible member? or shal we hold communion with them in *Germany*, and shal we deny it to our brethren in *England*? God forbid, that the exercise of our Christian charity, and communion should vary, according as Regions vary. If *whole Churches* be owned, because of their faith and holinesse of life (notwithstanding their errours) to be true visible Churches, then *one man* that hath those errours, may goe for a true visible Christian, because of his faith and holinesse. And in truth they who are the brethren of our elder brother, are our brethren, wil we, nil we, and we shal repent, if we use them not as brethren.

Yet againe, it wil be said, but *Paul* did wish they were all cut off that troubled the *Galatians*.

I answer; But mark who they were, they were such who brought such a doctrine that he profest, if they imbraced it, *Christ would profit them nothing*; they, who would set up a new Christ, a new way of salvation, to seek justification by their own works, he prayed they might be cut off, but he never wished it for errours of a lower nature.

But

Object. 4.

Gal. 5. 12.

Ans.

Gal. 5. 2.

But lastly, some may yet demand, and say, What if they, who hold such Opinions, joyn in communion with you, and in your communion make it their worke and practise; (for error is very Pragmatical) to draw all the rest of your company into their errors, and labour to infect all; yea, to put all into flames of division and confusion, unless they can prevaile. Shall we indure to see our brethren, and our people before our eyes drawne into errors, although those errors, it may be, are not fundamentall?

I answer; First, I know no great hurt for men to be permitted modestly, and humbly to debate among their Brethren the things wherein they differ; But,

Secondly, I answer; If men, who hold differing opinions in these lesser points, can neither be content to follow *Pauls* countel, to have *their faith, in these, to themselves before God*, nor modestly propound their arguments and grounds, and so be quiet, but must make it their work to draw (it may be) weak ones, into doubtful disputations, and thereby take them off from the study and prosecution of more weighty things; I can bee no Advocate for such people, if they judge the spreading of their opinions to be such a duty, that they take themselves bound in conscience, to do all that is possible, to draw all others in to them; I know no remedy, but such people must be contented to with-draw, and joyne with such Churches, where their opinions are received; for it cannot be conjectured that in any Society, of any nature, men will be quietly tolerated, who shall professedly be boures-fires, and kindle-fires, to disturbe their peace, and alwayes putting them into flames.

Suppose a man were of *Erastus* his opinion, that there is no Church-Government by Christs appointment, and yet withall should joyne in a Congregationall, or Presbyterian way, and they also willing to joyne in Church-Fellowship with him, as knowing his error not to be fundamentall, if this man will now make it his worke to draw them off, from what they beleewe to be Christs Ordinance, and their duty, that they must either all yeeld to him or enjoy no quiet, this I say will prove intolerable; thus also it is in Civil associations.

Suppose in any Corporation, where a Court of Aldermen, or Common-Counsell should bee Judges, if the major part judge any Cause before them, and the residue, who judge otherwise, will not be content to sit downe, but be alwayes quarrelling, and calumniating

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the rest, charging them to be erroneous, or unrighteous Judges; such unquiet and turbulent carriage over-throws all, and is not compatible with humane Society.

Beloved, I beseech you pardon me, that I have been so long upon this third Branch, for I confesse it is deeply settled upon my spirit, that were this rule received, it would have a great influence upon the healing of our divisions; I know indeed, that many learned and holy men think otherwise, and doe conceive, that their zeale for Christs truth must not suffer them thus far to tolerate them, who hold errors derogatory to the truth of Christ; but I humbly conceive that zeale for Christs truth should never use other meanes to preserve Christs truth, then Christ himselfe hath appointed; zeale to preserve Justice, and Righteousnesse, and to punish disorders in a Commonwealth is very commendable, but yet that zeale would not be commendable in a Magistrate, who should hang a man for such a fault, for which the Law hath only appointed the house of Correction, or Whipping-post. Let us confine our selves to Christs rules, and then let our zeale burn, as hot as may be.

4 They are
Schismaticall
who separate
from true
Churches for
light causes.

Fourthly, There is yet one sort more, and they are such, whose principles carry them to separate from particular Churches for light causes; suppose some defects, or some miscarriages in their Church-government, it may be, some too great connivence at unworthy or scandalous persons, or it may be some defects or miscarriages in their publick administrations. I say, the renting off, and departing from particular Churches for such causes, as these, will be found to be but Schism, to separate from Churches, from which Christ doth not separate, is schismatical; now it is cleare in the Scripture, Christ Jesus owneth Churches, who are defective in many things, and if, as I said before, Churches should bear with particular persons in their errors, certainly particular persons should bear with Churches; and therefore when a Churches faith is sound for the substance, and their worship Gospel-worship, though their Government be not perfect, and other defects found among them, we must not separate; and separation from them is the more unjust, if that Church bee seeking for light, and willing to be informed; I grant, there may bee flitting from one Church to another, for greater edification, which is without condemning that Church, they flit from: but separation from a true Church for want of some desirable perfection, is a fruit of this bitter root of Schisme, because it rents where Christ rents not; for if

we looke into the Scripture, we shal find there were Churches, who had many errors in *Faith*, others disorderly in their *Worship*, others had many among them loose in their conversations, but not one word of the Holy Ghosts counselling the Lords people to with-draw from them, or to go and gather into a body by themselves; they are often called upon to do what they can, to heale them, but not one word of separating from them, or with-drawing from them; Heb. 10. 25. indeed we sometimes read of some, who separated themselves, but Jude 19. we may also read in the same places, what sad brands the Spirit of God gives them; and should it bee lawful for every errour, and every miscarriage, or for the want of some desirable perfection thus to rend off, we must rend, and rend, and rend, for ought I know, to the end of the world, and the union and communion of Christs people would come almost to nothing; whereas he would have all his throughout the world, as they enjoy communion with himselfe, so to enjoy (as their occasion and need requires) communion with all his Saints; now such limitations and restrictions, as these are, make such a communion impossible; I am verily perswaded, that were the union and communion of the people of Christ rightly knowne, there is no Saint in any part of the world, but where ever he comes, might demand upon the profession of his faith, and his voluntary subjection to the Gospel, his right in the Ordinances, hear the Word with them, pray with them, receive the Sacrament with them; I say onely upon that ticket, that hee professeth that faith, which is the common faith of Gods people, and while hee is with them, walkes according to the Gospel rule; now where mens principles doe shut them up, after the manner I have been treating of, these things are not practicable. I shut up all this discourse, concerning all these, who are schismatical through erroneous judgements, with this brieve corollary; The communion of Saints one with another is not only a priviledge, but a duty injoyed by Christ, he hath not left us at liberty to chuse with whom we wil hold communion, and to refuse whom we list, no; as ever wee wil appear before him with comfort, wee must hold communion with those, who professe his name, and labour to *keep with them all, the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* Now, as these are schismatical from erroneous judgements, so there are others from principles of a corrupt heart, I shall only name them, and indeed naming them is sufficient to convince them, for no man dares take upon him to

² Some are Schismaticall from principles of a corrupt heart.

justify them, yet named they must be, for they are as mischeivous as the others.

1 As self-lovers
and self-seekers.

First, therefore all self-lovers, and self-seekers, with whom all others in their affections and spirits are regarded, onely as they can make use of them; we know that if the members of the body were thus affected, the whole body would soon perish. Private-wealthsmen, are never good Commonwealthsmen; *Paul* exhorted the Saints *not to looke upon our owne things, but every man on the things of others*, else it is impossible, but we must divide from them, as our private interest leads us: This self-seeking ruined and overthrew *Carthage*, and the other, of seeking the publick-weale, built up *Rome*, and so is it in our great, and spiritual Commonwealth.

Phil. 2. 4.

Plutarch.

2 Proud and
high-minded
spirits.

Secondly, All proud, insolent, arrogant, high-minded men, who must have rule, and beare sway where ever they come, or who use to despise and contemn others, *I have no need of thee*, full of themselves, and sleighting of others: This spirit of pride is a cursed root bringing forth heresie, schisme, contention, and every evil work. The first rent which ever was in Gods family, was the *pride* of the Angels, and ever since it hath born the like fruit; examples are innumerable, *Cain, Esau, Corah, Dathan, &c.*

3 Quarrellsome
and railing spirits.

Thirdly, All quarrellsome, railing, froward spirits, who upon every dissent from them in any opinion, or in matters of conversation, fall into railing language, branding others with odious terms, seeking to make them infamous and hateful: railing never cures error, or infirmity, but keeps division open, and makes the breach wider; truth and love joyned together may work great things, but truth and bitterness can do little.

4 Busic-bodies.

Fourthly, And so are all busic-bodies, who must have an oare in every mans boat, who cannot be content to keep within their owne calling, but as the Apostle expresseth their nature in this Text, are *wise*, or thinke more highly of themselves then they ought to think; all these polypragmatical spirits, which delight to be Bishops in all mens Diocesses, are dangerous persons, nothing more divides or rends the body, then when the members keepe not to their owne worke.

Rom. 2. 3.
1 Pet. 4. 15.

5 All factious
spirits.

And fifthly, All factious people, who, where ever they come will be making parties, (though it may be) they draw them not into a new Church, yet divide into several parties, some for *Pauls*, and some for

for *Apollos*, and some for another, and all that is but to make themselves seem some body, and serve their own bellies.

Paul often complains of such kind of men, these carnal men made the schisme in *Corinth*, of these he admonishes the Romans, *Mark* them, who cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine, which you have learned, and avoid them; for they that are such, *1 Cor. 12, Rom. 16. 17.* serve not our Lord *Jesu Christ*, but their owne bellies. A very sad sentence.

Sixtly, and lastly, All they, whose spirits carry them to foment and cherriish such, as make rents and divisions, who not onely bear with such, as we would bear with a disease, so bear with, as yet to lance it, and seek to cure it, but delight in them, as to make them the men of their counsel and confederacy, and thereby doe harden them in their way, expose themselves unto snares, and occasion others who are weak, to incline to these dividers, all these, some from one principle, others from another, help to rend and divide that body, which *Christ* would have preserved in unity.

I have thus far, according to my weaknesse, discovered to you the true causes, and in part the instruments of our woful divisions, which have made the Church of *Christ* present it selfe such a rueful spectacle, as it is at this day: what remaines, but only these two things?

First, That we all lament this, and mourne for it.

Secondly, That we all labour to help to cure it.

First, That we all lament it; I confesse our divisions in opinions are very sad, but our divided affections are sadder: were our spirits united, the spirit of love would have such a power upon our hearts, that when we had once learned to follow the truth in love, truth and love would carry all before them: Ah, that God would teach us to lay it to heart, and to mourne, that wee should be as so many *Ishmaels*, our sword against every man, and every mans against us. Beloved, we little consider how precious the peace of the Church of *Christ* ought to be, even more precious then our lives; we little consider how dishonourable our divisions are to *Jesu Christ*, making his *Jerusalem* appeare as *Babel*, a disordered and confused heap, when he dyed to make us one, and prayd to his Father that we might be one, we thus to expose his body to be a scorne and reproach, is very sad. We little consider how pleasing our divisions are to *Satan*, who prevayles upon our hearts, while we thus furiously buse

6 All who delight in the society of Schismatics.

Exhort. 1. To lament our divisions.

Ephes 1. 10.
John 17. 21.

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our heads; nor how pleasing are they to our common enemies, who, no doubt do secretly foment them, that thereby they may destroy us, and get the rule over us; our divisions and sub-divisions are strong weapons in their hands against us. Little doe wee lay to heart these things; if wee did, our hearts would bleed in secret for them; and I humbly beseech you, let these things be to us for a lamentation.

Exhort. 2.

To endeavour
to cure them.

1 Pray for it.

And secondly, Labour to heale them; Beloved, it must be done, Christ wil have it done, he wil compel us to it, he wil beat us into one, or he wil beat us til we are none; he wil not bear long, if we remaine as we are, and therefore let all Gods people first pray earnestly for it, *Oh pray for the peace of Jerusalem*, intreate the Prince of peace, and the Spirit of peace to grant us peace, to heale our divisions, to raise up healing instruments, make it our supplication every day, that our Lord, the good *Samaritan*, would poure in oyle and wine, and bind up theie our woful rents, he, and he alone can doe it. I read, that when the divisions in *Germany* about matters of Religion, were extreame hot and fierce, the Emperor *Charles* the fifth made a decree, called the *Interim*, that there should be common and publick peace in *Germany*, and none to make war upon other for the cause of Religion, but that Christian amity should be practised by all until a free and general Councel should be called: Oh pray to Christ for such an *Interim*, that we might not quarrel, but live in love, *until* himsele reveale such light, as wil make his people all of one minde; *Charles* made the Decree, but could not give the heart: our Lord can give the Decree and the heart also. Follow him with this Suite:

And secondly; Let us not onely pray, but let us labour to promote it, and let us to this end, examine our owne principles, and let us count no principle, no affection, no disposition of spirit worth the keeping, which wil not let us bee one with them, with whom Christ is one, and let us beleeve, that while we are in this world, we shal all of us know in part, and but in part; beleeve in part, and but in part; let us never expect to finde in this life, all who agree in fundamental truths, to agree in all other truths; and let us beleeve, that though every truth of Christ be precious, and worthy to be contended for, yet every truth is not necessary to salvation, nor necessary to be found in all, with whom we ought to hold and exercise

eise Christian communion ; many meats, which are wholesome, yet cannot be relished by all, with whom we may sit at the same table; while we are here, we shal often see cause, to differ in our judgement about many precious truths, but wee shall never see cause to differ in affection from those whom Jesus Christ loveth. Certainly, I may love, where Christ loves; and I may imbrace, where Christ imbraceth; and I may not interdict, where Christ doth not interdict, and wee may, and ought to bee of one heart with them, with whom wee cannot be of one minde in all things; the time is coming when we shal be of one minde. Luther and Calvin are of one mind in heaven, while their Disciples wrangle on earth: at which day he will appeare with more comfort, who beares and forbears with his weak and erring brethren, then he is like to do, that loves not his brother; sure I am this is Pauls counsel, who said, *Where-* Phil. 3. 15.
to we have attained, let us mind the same things, and if any be otherwise minded, the Lord will reveale it to him in his due time. And therefore I conclude this Use with that speech of the Apostle, Col. 3. 14. 15.
Above all, put on love, that is the band of perfection, and let the peace of God rule in your hearts; I meane that peace the Lord Jesus Christ is the Authour of, let that rule in your hearts; The Greeke word signifies, let it bee as the Officer the Greekes had in their solemne Games, who determind and quieted all differences, in all strifes and contentions, to whom he gave the Palm, that quieted all the rest; So let the peace of God be such a *brabeutes*, let it rule in our hearts. And the Spirit of God presseth it there upon this very ground, *because we are called thireunto in one body.*

We are brethren, let us not strive, or if we do contend, let us contend who shal be most holy, who shal love most, who shal beare most one with another, till that blessed day come, when Christs light shal shine so perfectly upon us, that wee shal be all of one minde, and one heart in all things.

Thus much for the first great duty, *That Saints are all one body, therefore there should be no schisme, no divisions among them.*

The second is, *That all the members should have the like* Use 2.
care one of another; that is, they should not onely love one another, and study to bee at peace one with another, but they should The members: to have the like care one of another.

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Should all sympathize one with another, if one be honoured, all should rejoice: if one suffer, all the rest should mourn, yea, they should all account themselves but as *Servants* for the good of all, and expresse this in using all their talents for the good of the soules of all, and the bodies of all, each within the compasse of his owne calling, and especially in the particular Church, where the Lord hath set them: These things are of great concernment, and for daily use, and therefore most worth the handling. But I suspect I have already presumed upon your patience.

Consider what I have said, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.

FINIS.